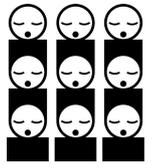




Whitehall Choir



From the Chairman

The autumn term is nearly here so before our first rehearsal, a review of the end of last term and a mention of how we might celebrate our 70th anniversary

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Dates for your diary

All choir dates can be found on our website but here they are again for your convenience

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Brahms Requiem

Our Come & Sing with the Whitehall Orchestra was well attended and we had some good feedback from the participants

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Choir AGM

A summary of the main points from the AGM held at the end of last term

James Longford

After five years with the choir, James is moving on

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St Margaret's



Some background on the venue for our next concert

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Josephine Baker Trust

Our soloists are frequently supported by this organisation

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From the Chairman

It's already time for the Whitehall Choir summer newsletter. I hope that you have had some time to relax over the holiday period and thankfully we did finally get some nice weather. Just a short time to go now before we meet again so here's an update on what's coming in our new season.

Our final concert of last season took us to a new venue at St Peter's, Eaton Square. After a few taxing moments when we arrived, we eventually devised a reasonable choir layout, given the limited number of chairs and I hope you agree that it generally suited us well. Certainly it's a good summer venue with its light interior and large front porch area for interval drinks. After some scepticism of the *Rossini Petite Messe solennelle* from all sides, in the event it went down very well with the audience and we put on a good performance. It was a treat to have James and Lindy with us once again and the harmonium provided much fascination!

A year in the Chairman role has gone quickly. I am very grateful for all the hard work and support I have received from Patrick as Treasurer and Liz as Secretary. We were all new to the roles this year and I am very fortunate that we have enjoyed a

friendly and effective working relationship. The choir benefits from a very hard working committee too and many skills are brought to the table. This year Rose and Laurie stood down as Librarians, Ben as Tenor and Malcolm as Bass representatives. A big thank you to them for carrying out these tasks so effectively and for bringing wisdom and knowledge to the committee meetings. Rachel also stood down as one of our Business Managers and we are grateful to her not



Rehearsing at St Peter's, Eaton Square

just for her work in this role but also her valuable contribution to the preparation of the concert programmes. At the AGM, Alastair was elected to take over from Ben, Daniel from Malcolm and Mark from Rose and Laurie and I look forward to welcoming them to the committee. Ben will be co-opted to continue to work with the committee on special projects that we want to run. Our first meeting is on Monday 17 September so please

raise any issues via your part representatives so that we can put them on the agenda.

As I said at the AGM, everyone in the choir earns a mention for what they do to make each year a success. Over a third of our members are active in some regular role and everyone plays a part, be it clearing up after a concert or doing a task at a special event such as a Come and Sing. We are an effective and organised group and this enables us to turn up at a venue and perform with a minimum of fuss. So thank you everyone!

70th Anniversary

We will be celebrating our platinum anniversary with our concert at the Banqueting House on Monday 1 July. To mark this, we are planning to run a competition for young composers to write a short piece. The exact details still have to be worked out but our intention is to perform the winning piece at one of our concerts. Ben Nicholls is going to coordinate the competition for us.

New term

We meet again on **Tuesday 4 September** to work on the *Langlais Messe Solennelle*, the *Poulenc Four Christmas Motets* and the *Durufle Requiem*. As usual, please arrive a little earlier to collect your music if you can so that we don't lose too much rehearsal time.

Jonathan

chairman@whitehallchoir.org.uk

Key dates for 2012 / 2013

Tuesday 4 September, autumn term starts

Friday 23 November, concert St Margaret's Westminster

Tuesday 11 December, Christmas concert, St Stephen's

Tuesday 8 January, spring term starts

Thursday 28 March, Bach B minor mass, (Maundy Thursday)

Tuesday 16 April, summer term starts

Monday 1 July, anniversary concert, Banqueting House

Brahms Requiem

With over 100 singers, our Come and Sing on Saturday 12 May was a great success.

Thanks to support from our own members, matched by an equal number of external registrations, the Come and Sing day went well and was a financial success for the choir. Visitors came to us from far and wide and we had lots of positive feedback. In particular they liked Paul's rehearsal style and the opportunity to sing a work like this with an orchestra. We plan to run a similar event with the Whitehall Orchestra again in May 2013, most likely on either Saturday 13th or Saturday 20th so keep those dates in mind for now. One possibility is Mendelssohn's *Elijah* but other suggestions are welcome, bearing in mind that we have to work up a reasonable standard in just one day.

James

Our next concert will be our last with James as our accompanist. He joined us in 2007 and after five years will be moving on.

We all appreciate the tremendous value of a good accompanist for our weekly rehearsals. We have benefited from a line of great pianists in recent years and James has been no exception. More than just an accompanist, he has been part of our music making, playing piano, organ or orchestra continuo in most of our concerts and he played a major role in the making of our Christmas CD. We have especially enjoyed the occasions when he has played with Lindy - the *Brahms Requiem* two piano version, the *Dyson Blacksmiths* and our last Rossini concert. We will say our formal good bye at the end of the term.

Choir AGM

The choir Annual General Meeting was held on Tuesday 10 July.

Patrick presented a summary of our financial situation and although we have a small surplus at the end of the last season, we can't be complacent as our costs continue to rise. We therefore need to be more active in selling tickets or face an increase in our yearly subscription in future years. At the last concert, a substantial fraction of the ticket sales were down to just a few individuals. The subscription will remain the same for the coming year and Patrick will be sending individual emails with payment details and contact information for you to confirm.

Our Constitution, last revised over 10 years ago, was becoming out of date. A number of small changes were approved at the meeting including the addition of a reference to the Charity Commission, a formal link to the Jubilee Fund and the removal of the requirement for a given number of committee members to be members of the Civil Service. Our formal link with the Department of

Trade and Industry and its successors however continues.

Nominations for all committee posts were received by the time of the AGM and no posts were contested. A list of the committee members for the coming season is given below for your reference.

In the general discussion, the idea of an incentive scheme for ticket sales was raised. Other organisations operate such systems and the idea might be, for example, that if a member sells a prescribed number of tickets during a year, then they would be entitled to a reduction in their annual subscription. The committee will be looking at this and other ideas for promoting our concerts during the year.

Another idea to encourage our regular audience to attend is to produce an external choir newsletter, similar to this one but aimed more at our contacts. It would contain news on what we are doing and perhaps some advance coverage of the next concert programme including a description of the works, venue and performers. If you have the time to

supply some of the copy for this, that would be much appreciated!

Josephine Baker Trust

This organisation frequently supports our concerts.

The trust is established for the advancement of education of the public in the art and science of vocal music. In particular it helps talented singers in the early years of their singing careers.

It has links with the Royal Academy of Music and the Royal College of Music and we are very grateful to Paul for arranging sponsorship of our young soloists when they come from the Royal Academy.

St Margaret's Westminster

Our last concert at St Margaret's was in 2004 and we had a programme of American music.

St Margaret's was built in the latter part of the 11th century so that local people could receive all the sacraments and ministrations of the Church, whilst leaving the monks in Westminster Abbey undisturbed. The first church was Romanesque in style but by the end of the 15th century, it had fallen into such a state of dilapidation that it needed almost total reconstruction. Rebuilding started in 1482 and the church was consecrated in 1523. Despite restorations in the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries, the structure is still substantially the same. The parish of St Margaret's originally covered a large area. Consequently the registers of baptisms, marriages and burials are among the most extensive in London.



Come and Sing Brahms Requiem

The committee

Chairman: Jonathan Williams

Secretary: Liz Walton

Treasurer: Patrick Haighton

Business Managers: Penny Prior & Katherine Herzberg

Librarian: Mark Graver

Publicity: Martin Humphreys, Ruth Eastman

Webmaster: Richard Grafen

Soprano Rep: Kate Goulden

Alto Rep: Alison Williams

Tenor Rep: Alastair Tolley

Bass Rep: Daniel Lambauer